

Jo Gusman

April 27, 2015

To: History/Social Science Committee

Re: Need for Latino history to be included in the California History/Social Science Framework draft

I am a K-12 Bilingual Education Cross-Cultural Specialist credentialed teacher, English learner program consultant, and was also a Lecturer at C.S.U. Sacramento, Teacher Education Department. I served as the only teacher member on President Ronald Reagan's Elementary Study Group, that wrote the report, "First Lessons: A Report On Elementary Education." In addition, I was appointed by Dr. Bill Honig, Superintendent of Schools, California Department of Education, to serve on the English Language Arts Framework, Model Curriculum Standards-Reading, Recommended Readings Handbook, and Instructional Materials Evaluation committees.

Based on my years of experience serving on California curriculum framework committees, I understand that the content of all frameworks will ultimately influence and inform publishers as they write student textbooks, teacher lesson planning guides, and resource materials that will be used by our K-12 students. With this in mind, it is important that the content, concepts, and skills presented in this framework honor the needs and interests of our diverse California student population.

As you know, curriculum frameworks are intended to serve as guides for policy makers, boards of education, administrators, teachers, and parents. Therefore, it is imperative that the content of the History/Social Science framework reflects those that we serve – California's diverse student population. Approximately 53% of California schools student population are from Mexican American heritage. A historical review shows that the last History/Social Science framework was published in 1987. Mexican-American history has been all but absent from our California curriculum frameworks, since that time. Based on this information, I respectfully recommend that the framework committee invite experts in the field of Mexican-American history and culturally responsive education to provide the History/Social Science framework committee members with up-to-date information, culturally responsive curriculum frameworks, literature, processes, and strategies that will be included in the new History/Social Science framework. The goal is to inform and empower the framework committee members, curriculum material developers, and ultimately our K-12 students with accurate, up-to-date, relevant content, concepts, and resources.

Creating a more culturally responsive History/Social Science framework will ensure that California students appreciate and honor the rich and important contributions Mexican-Americans, and all cultures, have made to California's economy, government, education system, arts, technology, medicine, as well as to their individual communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jo Gusman